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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Migrants were aided by the Colorado Migrant Ministry, which worked with public school officials and health and welfare agency personnel, helped to determine legislative needs, and provided direct services to migrants in three areas of Colorado.

In Rocky Ford, a Spanish-speaking educated husband-wife-daughter team worked with various groups who led activities, stories, crafts, swim trips, remedial reading, games, sports, instrumental music instruction, singing, and household skills.

In Fort Lupton, a staff of seven organized:a children's program to develop motor and social skills; an informal teen-age club group which did its own planning and financing; a motor mechanics class; a religious concerns program that utilized the services of a Spanish-speaking seminary student; a home economics course in meal preparation, nutrition, and sewing; and adult programs.

In Palisade, a staff of eight organized a children's program stressing moral values with play activities, a boys' club and a girls' club, a large play house, a park program of recreation, a teen recreation program, a vocational education program, a woodworking group, adult programs, and child care programs.

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COLORADO

MIGRANT MINISTRY

ANNUAL REPORT 1961

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COLORADO MIGRANT MINISTRY

Preliminary Report - 1961

15,000 migrants in Colorado during 1961! The Migrant Ministry touched about 1600 of these! But to write the figure 1600 is all too simple. It is a statistic and in no way can it express the hours of untiring staff time and devotion spent in seeking out and making friends with new people. A figure can never really represent the joy of seeing response to friendliness in the eyes of a lonely people or the enthusiasm of children who have at last found some measure of security in the regularity of your visits or programs. Migrants are not statistics! They are people with the same desires and needs as you and I, but with problems intensified by constant travel, difficult housing, and irregular work opportunity.

The Migrant Ministry, though a cooperative effort of Local Community Committees, the Colorado Council of Churches, and the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of Churches, is not "another organization." It is an arm of the Church. It is interested men and women, volunteers, Denominational Committee folk, community committee members, United Church Women and others giving of money and service that the needs of migrant people may be met. Their efforts are toward meeting these needs in various ways.

I. Direct Service Program:

A. Rocky Ford

The program in Rocky Ford was extended somewhat this year. Mrs. Adelle Luebke, who had served this area in 1960, returned once again. She is a public school teacher with some facility in the Spanish language. This year her staff partner was her husband, Benjamin Luebke, a professor of social science at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute. He also speaks Spanish and has a real understanding of the Spanish-speaking migrant. They were assisted for part of the summer on a volunteer basis by their daughter. This made a strong team for visitation. The Jeep Harvester groaned and rattled its way through another season of taking books, Bibles, toys, games, and educational materials as well as the teachers and volunteers out to the scattered camps and ranches.

West Ranch, Center, Newdale, Swink, Haines, and Manzanola were but a few of the places served in a program which could not be completely scheduled or located in one place. Some of the elements of program were: stories with small children; crafts, swim trips, help in reading for school age; games, sports, swimming, library, instrumental music instruction and singing for teen-agers; serving and making of household items such as rugs, curtains, etc. for mothers.

Christian teaching was an integral part of program. Many families were invited and taken to church. Contact was made with over 200 "braceros" with educational films, slides of Mexico, literature, recreation and recording of their own music. Taped programs in Spanish were used 4 times on radio.

B. Fort Lupton

Fort Lupton Labor Camp was served this season by seven staff people. Miss Judy Holmes, of Golden, Colorado, who had been on staff in 1960, gave continuity and leadership. She was aided by Miss Janet Cardwell of Indianapolis, whose services were furnished by the Department of Student Work of the Disciples Denomination. With the interest of local churches and the assistance of volunteers, these two planned and led the children's program.

Children's Program: At Fort Lupton this year the camp facilities were scheduled for the various church groups. Thus we had children's program during either the morning or afternoon of every week-day. Since the staff house was not available to us this year, Miss Holmes and Miss Cardwell lived in Fort Lupton. This made continuity of children's program more difficult to achieve and much preparation had to be completed away from the camp. However, the children's program was most constructive. An interest center program was maintained to develop motor as well as social skills. Creative play, informal dramas, stories, nature walks and special events were integral program content. Worship services were held at the end of each session so that the children could feel free to leave if there was objection from their church.

Teen Program: An evening group of teen-agers was led by Judy Holmes and Janet Cardwell, with assistance from the whole staff team. The young people came to staff asking for programs. Staff acted as sponsors helping the young people, as an informal sort of club group, to do their own planning, arranging and paying for their own activities. Their sense of responsibility began to be evident in this way and they were more at home in relationships with the total community.

Motor Mechanics: Mr. Herbert Johnson, an instructor in the Engineering Dept. of the University of Colorado at Boulder, headed our Vocational Education project. He spent full time on the job, assisting where necessary with details of children's program, coordinating staff activities, leading recreation with boys in the afternoon, and teaching the course in motor mechanics in the evening. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening of each week, a few older fellows met for blackboard instruction followed by actual dismantling and reconstruction of a mounted motor. Such a class cannot be too large since only a few people can have access to one motor at one time. Moreover, individual questions must be answered with individual instruction. But for the few who could be accommodated this was important and we may never know how much it will mean to them and their families in days to come.

Religious Concerns: Mr. Victor Rodriguez, a Spanish-speaking seminary student, spent three evenings each week and Sunday morning at the camp visiting, counselling, assisting in adult program, and encouraging attendance and involvement in worship. His work was slow and difficult, but his very presence had meaning to the people and we feel a comparable person should be provided next year.

Home Economics: Mrs. Edith Vermillion, a housewife from the Boulder area, volunteered her services in the area of home economics with older girls and mothers. Since the kitchen was not available to us this year we did not do as much with cooking as had been done previously. Some helpful things were done however in meal preparation and nutrition, but it is hoped that we may have former kitchen facilities available next year. She also helped with sewing during the three nights each week when we were allowed in camp. It is hoped that better sewing machines may soon be made available. However, she helped the women secure material, assisted in pattern selection, and held more of a sewing clinic for problems rather than a sewing class as such. Many women were reached in this way - far more than could have been helped in a more formal class. Moreover, Mrs. Vermillion was their friend. Her visits continued after our formal program was complete.

Adult Programs: Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Sedillo of Denver volunteered their services three evenings each week to do visitation and to develop and work with an adult group. Their native facility with the Spanish language helped them in their many, many hours of home visitation which all felt was a most important part of the task.

The Sedillos advised the adult club which planned and carried out the family night movies or talent shows. The Club ran their own thrift shop, income from which was used for their own expense of the family nights they planned. The Sedillos were also truly the friends of these migrant people who came to them with their joys as well as their problems. Such people should always be on staff for visitation and adult work.

Child Care: We are sorry that the child care program could not be worked out this year due to the alternating time schedule. It may be another year or two before it can be seriously considered.

Summary: There are always problems, but in general this was a good season at Fort Lupton. The staff was a team to whom we owe a great debt. The emphasis was on the involvement and development of migrant leadership. As one staff person summarized it: "As far as I was concerned the program was a success. The mothers and fathers coop rated in every way. They need more ideas to work over and then come up with something they can use themselves. I would like to see them advance in education, to feel they need it, to be prepared for the time when there might not be crops for them. But I also want them to keep their heritage of a gentle and fine love for their families, their homes, and a modest way of living." Another staff member writes: "I came away from Fort Lupton with a good feeling because I think this summer was successful. The formation of the clubs was good. The people must continue to learn how to do things for themselves instead of our doing for them. They must learn how to get along in the society outside their experience. These things these people are anxious to do and must be given the opportunity."

C. Palisade

The Palisade Labor Camp had eight staff, including those with the special Vocational Education Project. Miss June Lindell of Grand Junction and Miss Mary Ann Hepner of Philadelphia, Pa., were the core staff workers in camp residence from June 11 to September 8. They were joined later by Miss Sofia Jimenez of Taft, Texas, and Mr. Trinidad Sanchez of Trinidad, Colorado. Seldom has a staff worked more untiringly and effectively, and the total Palisade staff deserve our gratitude for their service this summer.

Children's Program: During the morning hours children were divided into two age groups, 3-6 and 7-12. The curriculum "Growing in Christian Ways" was used with the younger children, while "Man's Part in God's World" was used with the older ones. Activity center type of teaching was used here also with housekeeping corner, circle game center, music center, story rug, worship center, etc. Milk and cracker time became picnic time. Monday field trips to the zoo, fire department, library, etc., were followed by refreshments at a nearby playground. Discussion was guided to things observed on field trips and how these affect our lives or our responsibility to the community. Truthfulness, cleanliness, respect for property, etc. were a few of the concepts which staff attempted to teach.

Each Wednesday afternoon children were loaded into cars and taken to the municipal pool for swimming.

A Boys' Club and a Girls' Club were held with older children in the afternoons. The program varied with trips, treasure hunts, hikes and worship.

A large two-room play house was constructed late in the season. It was 8x12x7 ft. high, and was used to teach the older children homemaking skills. The boys learned carpentry by framing windows and doors, installing a partition and making furniture. Girls learned decorative skills and sewing at the same time.

A park program of recreation was held each afternoon after the public summer school until time for the parents to return from work. Mr. Trinidad Sanchez was in charge of this program.

Teen Program and Recreation: Teen programs were held periodically throughout the season on Friday nights. A small room in the recreation building was used for social evenings.

The evening recreation program four nights each week, Monday through Thursday, was under the supervision of Mr. Darrel Meisenheimer, coach at Palisade High School. This was primarily for older teen-age boys. Someone with ability and know-how in teaching and playing sports was a definite asset to the program. Softball, basketball and other sports were on the program.

Vocational Education Project: The home-skills class for teen-age girls began on June 28 and ran three nights each week under the direction of Mrs. Oneta Meisenheimer of Palisade, a graduate in Home Economics education. Her

classes were a popular place in camp. The girls cooked and ate together, discussing not only food preparation but selection, purchase, etc. The later part of each evening was spent in sewing. New machines are needed before next year, but some fine work was accomplished and shown. This group made and sold refreshments for one of the large family night gatherings.

The woodworking group with Mr. Arthur Greenhill, vocational instructor in the Palisade schools, turned out some most interesting work although not as many teen-age boys participated as had been expected.

Mr. James Thayer of Grand Junction, taught the group in auto mechanics. He himself is a professional auto mechanic and his teaching was under the general guidance of Mr. Walt Wheeler of the vocational instruction department of the Grand Junction public schools. Again, an automobile motor was dismantled and re-assembled under close supervision and instruction. Only a few men could participate but there was intense interest. At least one student wishes to obtain further education, while still another hoped to procure a job in the field this fall. The response was truly inspiring.

Adult Programs: On Monday and Friday the sewing room was made available for the use of the mothers. Movie nights for pure recreation were held occasionally. An all-family film. "The Littlest Outlaw" was shown at the height of the season, with refreshments provided by the Teen-girls. Over 460 people were present.

Child Care: The child care program during the peach harvest was held this year in camp, while the older children were occupied in summer school. June Lindell, Mary Ann Hepner, and Sofia Jimenez rotated time schedules for supervision. Many wonderful volunteers participated in this program. Noon lunch was prepared in the kitchen of the center under health supervision. This was a very rewarding program.

Religious Concerns: The plan had been to have a seminary student on staff. He was to do ministerial home visitation in camp and in scattered migrant housing locations. We hoped that he would be considered as the camp or area migrant chaplain providing direct spiritual leadership. However, at the last minute plans went awry and no such person was available.

Migrants are encouraged to attend local services on Sunday mornings. In the evening a more informal type of service is provided at the camp. Without anticipated staff on hand we requested local church groups to lead and participate in these Sunday evening services. However, it is difficult for many to lead in the informal type of service needed here. Attendance was not too gratifying until we were able to go completely to the type of evening service originally envisioned. This was a campfire program centered around worship and one evening drew nearly 600 people. We are already searching out leadership for this part of the program next season.

II. Public Action and Legislation:

Staff worked as closely as possible this season with the Public School officials and the personnel of Health and Welfare Agencies. We also were involved in legislative activity in a way which had not been anticipated. This year the Palisade Labor Camp was included in the Legislative Council survey to determine the need of legislation in behalf of agricultural migrants. Questionnaires were left with staff at Palisade to be completed by interviews with migrant families. Staff did as much as possible in the time available to them. However, the publicity surrounding the entire investigation caused considerable unrest. It took a great deal of visitation and explanation to regain the confidence of the people.

The Mesa County Migrant Council worked long and hard to bring into being a medical care proposal for the migrants of that area. Medical care was provided for all the migrants working for members of the Peach Growers' Association. This free care was provided by the local doctor evenings and included medication and treatment as well as examination. The total cost was less than $600.00 and was finally assumed by the Mesa County Peach Board of Control. This is a real step forward in locally provided medical care for migrants. Details may be secured through the Mesa County Migrant Council, of which the Migrant Ministry is a part.

During this past session of Congress 5 migrant bills were passed in the United States Senate. The letters from our committee people helped accomplish this. Generally speaking we have had the assistance of only one Colorado Senator in this matter. The Bills cover Child Labor, grants for migrant education, including summer schools, grants to states and local communities to encourage migrant health programs, licensing of labor contractors, and the establishment of a Citizens' Committee by the President to advise on legislation and problems in this area. Your help will be needed to assure passage in the House in the January session.

III. Summary:

In this year 1961 we have sorely missed the services of Miss Louise Bashford. We certainly are grateful for the years of solid foundation she struggled to provide for Colorado Migrant Ministry. It is on that foundation that we still build.

We have continued a high level of service and interest this year only because of the dedication of staff, volunteers, committee people, and interested friends all over the state. We are assured that this support will continue to be seen in the years to come under the leadership of Rev. Jack Alford.

We would also like to express a word of appreciation to Rev. E. L. Whittemore and Mrs. Lena Riedel of the staff of the Colorado Council of Churches for all the added time and effort which they expended to assure the success of this Ministry during 1961.

These are years of crisis for the Migrant Ministry. Its years of "crying in the wilderness" have paid off. Interest is high across the country in the problems of migrants. It is now that we need the support of everyone in order that long-needed reforms may be forthcoming. However, we must be sure that legislation is workable and reasonable, bringing justice and stability, not only to the migrant but to the grower and employer as well. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is to and for all men whether migrant, employer, or committee member.

* * *

November 10, 1961